

The Human Side

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES • SPRING 2005

The Georgia Department of Human Resources, in partnership with others, will effectively deliver compassionate, innovative, and accountable services to individuals, families and communities.

Governor Calls for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention

Governor Sonny Perdue has just launched an unprecedented effort to prevent substance abuse among Georgia youth. The Governor's Cooperative Agreement Advisory Committee (CAAC), consisting of key leaders from across the state, will convene over a one-year period to establish a unified prevention framework that includes planning for coordinated alcohol and other drug abuse, violence and drug-related crime prevention and intervention. Wendi L. Clifton of the Governor's Office serves as chair of CAAC and **Brenda Rowe, PhD**, Director of Prevention Services and Programs for the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD), directs the work of this committee.

The effort is supported by a planning grant from the Substance Abuse and

Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMSHA/CSAP). The planning grant is designed to help Georgia develop the foundation needed to compete for funding to implement a comprehensive statewide prevention strategy.

So, why is this effort important to Georgia?

A study by the Division of Public Health with support from MHDDAD and the Department of Education found that in Georgia significantly fewer youth use tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and inhalants than in other states. However, substance abuse and drug-related risky behavior remain a serious problem among youth in Georgia, with other studies indicating that use of marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy and methamphetamine by youth is on the

rise.

Due to the tremendous potential of this effort, CAAC has enlisted support from national drug prevention experts representing organizations such as SAMHSA/CSAP, the National Institutes of Health and the Emory University College of Medicine, who will help ensure that CAAC's work is on target.

—Kenya Bello

TANF Work Participation Ends Year on High Note

Commissioner **B. J. Walker** and the Division of Family and Children Services' Office of Financial Independence are making rapid progress in their effort to have more Georgians on payrolls instead of welfare rolls. Work participation rates in Georgia's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program increased from 17.65 percent in January 2004, to 52.6 percent in February. That's a 35 percent increase over the past year. Increasing work participation

Continued on page 3



Monica Kaufman of WSB-TV (r) interviews Commissioner **B.J. Walker** for an April 11 program that will kick off a year's campaign to increase public awareness of the foster care and adoption system. The station will air a series of special reports called "Georgia's Forgotten Children," on what is working, what isn't and how Georgians can help. Individuals and organizations will be encouraged to become foster parents, volunteer as mentors or court advocates for foster children, or contribute funds or supplies such as clothes and toys.

In This Issue

Commissioner's Corner	pg. 2
Learning Management	pg. 2
Adult Protective Services	pg. 3
Georgians Quit Tobacco.....	pg. 4
Forums Influence Aging	pg. 5
Service 2 Seniors Campaign....	pg. 5
DHR Portal Opens.....	pg. 7
Who's News	pg. 7
What's News.....	pg. 8

Commissioner's Corner

"DHR: The Things We Share"

We have many specialties and specialists in DHR. There are over 80 programs — each has its own language, policy and history. We are responsible to different federal agencies who set rules that vary from program to program. It is a wonder that we can talk to each other at all.

But we have more in common than anything that separates us.

The last time I talked to you in this space I talked about values — a powerful way to guide and unite us in our work. The value we place on self-sufficiency, family, community and helping families to support their loved ones applies to all of our work — protecting children, protecting vulnerable adults, helping individuals with disabilities, providing economic support and protecting the public from health hazards.

We have other things in common. We do not work in a vacuum — we work in similar contexts.

No matter what you do in DHR — no matter who you serve — context matters. For us, at DHR, the relevant context is family and community.

I have said that families are better able to care for their loved ones than is government. Families provide the context where important teaching is



done. Families provide positive values about health, work and literacy. Eating right, success in school, work — these values are taught in families.

The other context is community. Responsible adults in communities can take care of the children and help isolated, troubled families. If we share values and have honest communication with our communities, they will welcome our consumers — including consumers who need mental health services in group homes.

Government cannot substitute for the human connections formed in family and community. We can't teach a child to trust and love — only families can do that. We can't instill the value of work and accomplishment in a teenager

— only a family can hope to do this. We can't meet our goals related to self-sufficiency or quality community services without energizing Georgia's communities.

We have another important thing in common. We work with people and families. And people want the same things.

One important example is employment and self-sufficiency. People want their families to be self-sufficient. Work helps responsible adults better care for their loved ones. There is an inherent value in work and in the example it sets for children.

If a \$260 TANF payment is our only economic safety net, then the safety net isn't safe. TANF parents want to work. Seniors want to work. Disabled people want to work. They know, no matter what, they are better off working. We can help — but we need employers to come on board. We need communities to connect people with jobs. The faith community, civic associations, and employer groups — they can make a difference.

We have part of the answer. Communities and our many partners can supply the rest. We must meet them more than halfway.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosa Waymon".

Learning Management System Enhances Staff Training

DHR works hard to ensure that its workforce has the skills required to meet new challenges and take advantage of new technology. In January the Office of Human Resource Management and Development (OHRMD) launched a Learning Management System (LMS) to allow both managers and other employees to keep track of training levels and needs throughout the department.

"LMS is an interactive, Web-based system that encourages professional development by allowing people to

design a personal learning plan, record their training history, apply for courses online, and even take courses while sitting at their own computer instead of traveling to a training facility," says OHRMD Director **Rosa Waymon**. "Management can see who has acquired new skills and test staff to spot training needs."

OHRMD's courses in computer skills, supervision and subjects such as customer service are now available through LMS. During 2005, certification programs and specialized training

administered by DHR's divisions and offices will enter the system. More electronic learning ("e-learning") opportunities — courses that employees can take at their desktop computers — will be added to the three courses already available. Distance learning, which opens a classroom to students all over the state through teleconferencing, will also be explored.

For an online presentation about how LMS works, go to www2.state.ga.us/departments/dhr/ohrmd/index.html.

— Barbara Joye

Adult Protective Services Builds Public Awareness About Elder Abuse

Abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable and elderly persons is a growing issue nationally and in Georgia. The Division of Aging Services' (DAS) Adult Protective Services (APS) Section addresses domestic abuse, neglect or exploitation of disabled persons over age 18 or elders over age 65 who do not live in residential long-term care facilities. APS also serves victims of self-neglect in this same age group who are not able to meet their basic daily needs because of a physical or mental condition. The program's caseworkers try to prevent repeated abuse through the least restrictive measures, so that disabled adults and seniors can remain safely in their homes and in their own community.

APS moved from the Division of Family and Children Services to DAS last July to better align the services with the population served.

TANF Work Participation *continued from page 1*

has been a major component of the commissioner's plan to position Georgia as a national leader and innovator in child and family welfare.

DHR's strategy focuses on encouraging TANF participants to work and explaining how being employed will help their families.

"A lifetime on welfare is not a viable option for a family, because welfare is not good enough for any child," Walker said. "\$260 a month is simply not enough to make families self-sufficient, and self-sufficient families are needed to strengthen our communities."

In fiscal year 2004, DHR closed more than 60,000 TANF cases, and slightly more than 55,000 new cases were opened.

—Bryan Toussaint

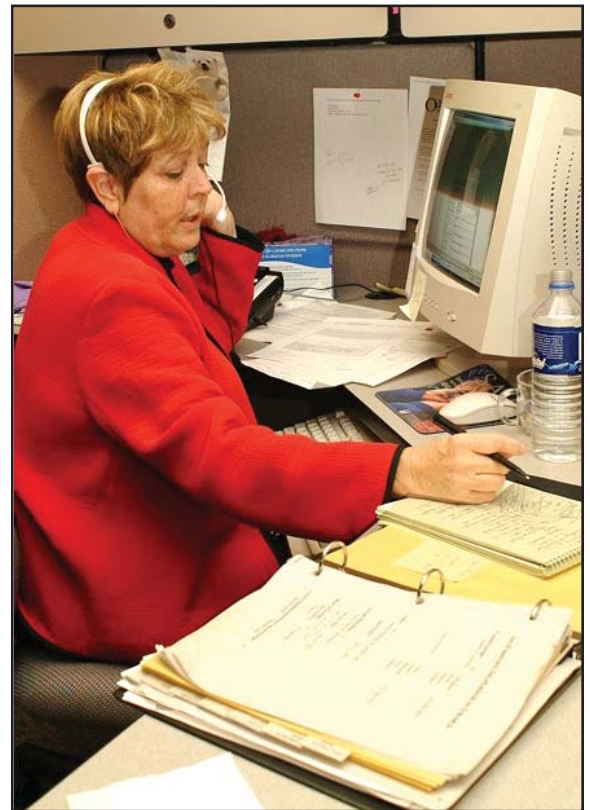
"Providing Adult Protective Services gives us an opportunity to build new public awareness about the need to protect one of our most vulnerable populations all over Georgia," said DAS Director **Maria Greene**. "We are expanding on our mission of assisting older individuals, at-risk adults and persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers to achieve safe, independent and self-reliant lives."

Once an APS case is open, it remains active until the risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation is reduced or the client refuses intervention. Services include: investigations of allegations; assessment of the individual's needs and areas of risk; finding another residence for the abused person; arranging for medical help; educating a caregiver on how to care for an older adult; and finding a senior center for the older adult to attend to relieve stress in the home. In some cases, emergency medical services or law enforcement intervention is necessary.

Law enforcement officers, financial institution employees, and medical and human services personnel are among those required to report suspected cases of adult maltreatment. In all instances, the identity of the reporter is kept confidential.

A Central Intake Unit has been set up in APS to take incoming calls and accept referrals for APS investigation and intervention.

- To report suspected abuse of a disabled adult or elder person in the community, call Adult Protective Services at 404-657-5250 in Metro Atlanta or toll-free at 1-888-774-0152 statewide.



Patricia Raley, a Central Intake specialist for Adult Protective Services (APS), takes incoming calls and accepts referrals for APS investigation and intervention.

- Reports of abuse in nursing homes or personal care homes should be directed to the Office of Regulatory Services Intake toll-free at 1-800-878-6442 or 404-657-5728 in Metro Atlanta.
- Reports may also be made to the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, which works as an advocate to resolve complaints on behalf of residents of long-term care facilities, toll-free at 1-888-454-5826.
- In emergency situations, contact local law enforcement at 911.

—Edna Jackson



Unit Helps DHR Upgrade Services

DHR's Office of Human Resource Management and Development (OHRMD) takes the "development" part of its name seriously. The office recently established the largest and most comprehensive organizational planning and development unit currently operating in Georgia state government.

"This department emerged from a period of change with many new organizational needs," says OHRMD director **Rosa Waymon**. "We are providing what amounts to an in-house consulting service that addresses organizational effectiveness."

OHRMD itself reorganized last year when it was created from a merger of

two smaller training and personnel offices. Since then, the new Organizational Planning and Development Section (OPD) led by Rosemary Calhoun has helped upgrade several critical DHR agencies.

As in the corporate world, DHR's OPD helps work groups take on new functions or reorganize to improve their effectiveness. Human resources (personnel) departments are suited to this task because they can address both the human and the technical side of issues such as shifting responsibilities, training needs and how people work together.

Although OPD's staff have worked as a unit for less than a year, they have already addressed some critical needs. They helped DHR's Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) design a career ladder to improve retention of experienced child welfare workers, as part of a reorganization DFCS is undergoing to improve its effectiveness. DFCS also identified a few county offices that were not meeting performance standards, so OPD proposed an evaluation plan to spot the problems. Next, OPD helped the county DFCS leadership interview key managers, survey employees, and talk with anyone from the community who had come forward with concerns. They are now helping to plan corrective actions.

Last year DHR's Division of Aging Services (DAS) took on a new program, Adult Protective Services (APS), formerly a part of DFCS, where it had been paired with Child Protective Services. OPD helped DAS design a system for choosing new supervisors based in DAS regions rather than DFCS county offices, and staff were hired to replace caseworkers who did not choose to leave DFCS.

"Incorporating the APS program was a monumental task, and we only had four months," says DAS Director **Maria Greene**. "They really put their nose to the grindstone and helped us a lot."

A Happy New Year Helping Georgians Quit Tobacco

Throughout the New Year holiday season the Division of Public Health's tobacco use prevention program and its partners in the Chronic Disease Branch urged Georgia smokers to make stopping smoking their number one resolution.

Television ads ran during many sporting events to make male smokers aware of the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line. In Georgia, males smoke far more than females, yet females are over 55 percent of all callers to the Quit Line. Women have gotten the message and are stopping smoking and getting healthier.

The state-sponsored holiday promotion included numerous newspaper articles, public service announcements, and interviews on television and radio. The 19 public health districts also used this time to encourage smokers to quit. Each district planned media events and other activities to promote the Quit Line.

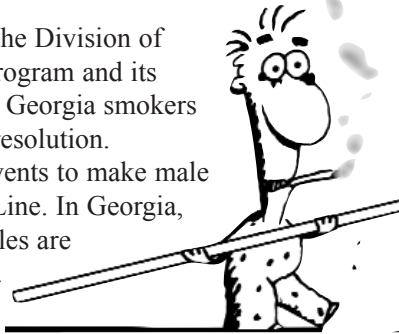
The result was an astounding 595 calls for the week of January 3-9 — the largest one-week total in the history of the Quit Line.

The Quit Line (1-877-270-7867; for Spanish speakers: 1-877-266-3863) is a statewide, toll-free, telephone-based service for all Georgia residents age 13 and older who wish to become tobacco-free. The Tobacco Quit Line is funded by the master tobacco settlement through the state's Tobacco Use Prevention Section in partnership with the Georgia Cancer Coalition. Over 38,000 callers have contacted the GAQL for assistance since its launch in October 2001.

Callers are connected to a trained counselor who assesses their readiness to quit, enrolls them in a quit program, helps set a quit date and schedules follow-up calls. Each caller is then sent a Quit Kit with information on reasons to quit; what happens to the body once you quit; and various ways to resist the craving to smoke. Callers can also choose to be referred to local cessation resources throughout Georgia. They are encouraged to call back as many times as necessary in order to be successful in their effort to quit.

Tobacco use is the most preventable cause of death in the United States and Georgia. More than 11,000 people die in Georgia every year from tobacco-related illnesses — that's more than all the deaths from alcohol, cocaine, heroin, AIDS, murder, suicide, auto accidents and fires *combined*. If you smoke, it's not too late to make a resolution to quit. Call the Quit Line now.

— Gary Cochran



Continued on page 5

Unit Helps DHR Upgrade Services continued from page 4

When the Systems Management Unit — essentially a mail processing operation — moved from DFCS to the Office of Facilities and Support Services (OFSS), OPD helped integrate the staff into the new work environment. Now, OPD is helping OFSS analyze the way the unit handles its main task: sending notices to clients about their benefits, currently a labor-intensive process using old equipment. OPD will help OFSS implement any changes that may be required to increase the unit's efficiency, especially if jobs are affected. The first step: OPD is helping OFSS interview current employees to ask for their ideas on how to improve the unit's operations.

OFSS also benefited from OPD's help with personnel issues when the transportation unit downsized from 12 to seven regional coordinators. "They provide an independent, objective viewpoint to help with organizational change," says OFSS Director **Jim Bricker**. "These things can be emotional. They helped us set up a fair and legal process for deciding who the seven managers would be, and helped some of the others find new jobs. They also helped with outplacement when DHR's forms warehouse shut down. As a result, everyone who had worked there found a new position."

Forums Aim to Influence Aging Policy

As most people know, our aging population is steadily increasing. To help shape the future of aging policy in the United States for the next decade, the Georgia Council on Aging (GCOA) has scheduled five public forums on issues that concern this population. All are official 2005 White House Conference on Aging events. These conferences are held once every ten years.

The three upcoming forums will be held April 21, 2005 in Augusta; May 10-12, 2005 at Lake Lanier; and July 14, 2005 in Atlanta. Forums were also held last November and in January 2005.

GCOA operates as a separate office within the DHR Division of Aging Services.

The statewide sponsors of the forums are GCOA, DHR Division of Aging Services, the Georgia Gerontology Society and the Georgia Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

GCOA will submit a written report summarizing the recommendations to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, which will be held in Washington, D.C., October 23-26, 2005. During this conference, delegates from across the nation will decide on recommendations to be sent to the President of the United States and Congress to be used as a guide in setting a national aging policy for the



(L-R) **Beverly Littlefield**, DHR Program Development and Operations Section manager; **Kathleen Votava**, DHR Program Development and Operations Section; and **Melanie McNeil**, Georgia Council on Aging executive director discuss topics that have been identified by the White House Conference on Aging committee in Washington, D.C.



Continued on Page 7

Service 2 Seniors Campaign

The Division of Aging Services (DAS) will kick off its "Service 2 Seniors: Information to Families" public awareness campaign in May, which is Older Americans Month.

Numerous information fairs will be held in all 12 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) regions statewide. These fairs will offer information and one-on-one counseling on Medicare, the new Medicare drug benefits, health insurance, security in retirement, legal problems, long-term care issues,

abuse, neglect and exploitation, and other aging matters.

DAS is working in a public/private partnership with WSB-TV, the AAAs, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and community partners and sponsors to make this campaign a success.

"This is an expansion of the Medicare 2 Seniors Campaign last year, which held 24 information fairs with over 7,000 in attendance. We are expecting this campaign to be even

larger than last year's," said **Jennie D. Deese**, director of GeorgiaCares.

For information on the dates, times and locations of these fairs, contact your local Area Agency on Aging or the DAS Information and Referral Line at 404-657-5319.

— Edna Jackson

Update: DHR Portal Opens Wider

Over a year ago, The Human Side reported that DHR's webmasters and the Georgia Technology Authority were working with every division and office to turn our corner of the Internet into a "portal" — a wide-open doorway to our services and information, that anyone can use. Since then, DHR's portal: www.dhr.georgia.gov has continued to open wider, and shows no sign of slowing down.

The portal is an interactive Web site that allows the user to find information about all programs and services in one place. The pages have a common look, and users can find information in all of them the same way.

Web pages for most DHR divisions and offices have been brought into the statewide portal established for all Georgia state agencies. The Division of Aging Services (DAS) and the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE)

joined the portal in January. The Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, which operates as an independent advocacy office within DAS, recently launched its own, separate portal.

"Interactive functions" make the portal a two-way street, not just a source of information. OCSE offered DHR's first interactive online service, "Where's My Child's Check?" back in October 2002. This allowed parents with child support orders enforced by OCSE to track their payments.

A series of new functions followed, expanding the ability of parents — those paying as well as those receiving support — to send and receive information about their cases, apply for services, and make payments online. Now all OCSE's Web pages and online functions are part of the DHR portal.

This spring, Web pages for the Office of Adoptions will be added to the Division of Family and Children Services' section of the portal. The Office of Regulatory Services, the Office of Human Resource Management and Development, and the Division of Public Health should join DHR's portal by summer's end.

Another interactive function will allow facilities regulated by ORS, such as nursing homes and hospitals, to report online "incidents" of possible violations. This will be faster than notification by mail and could enable ORS to investigate sooner.

On Public Health's pages, emergency medical technicians will be able to apply for recertification and pay the fee online.

But that's not all. Before the year is over, expect a DHR Intranet: "Inside DHR," with pages exclusively for department employees. Everyone on staff will have a password. "This should become your home page," says DHR Webmaster **Scott Hand**. "You'll be able to receive breaking news about the department and messages from the

Second Prize GPHA Photo Contest Winner



(l-r) Nurses **Muna Wagner** and **Renee Smith** make visiting the Whitfield County Health Department's children's clinic fun. **Jennifer Moorer**, Public Information Officer and Emergency Preparedness Specialist for the North Georgia Health District, won second prize for this photo in the Georgia Public Health Association's annual photography contest. GPHA titled it "Working in the Present," to match "Assuring a Health Future" (see *The Human Side*, winter 2004) and the first prize winner: "Reflecting on the Past," which will appear in the summer 2005 *Human Side*.

Continued on page 7

You're on Team Georgia

A Web site especially designed to support State of Georgia employees in their jobs now offers lots of useful information, thanks to Governor Sonny Perdue's Team Georgia initiative. The Team Georgia Connection at <http://team.georgia.gov> provides a single point of entry to the latest news and events, career and retirement planning resources, current traffic conditions and other professional and personal needs. It also features a phone directory for all State of Georgia employees. More information and interactive features will be added soon.

Forums *continued from page 5*

next decade.

Anyone wishing to attend these events should contact GCOA at 404-657-5343. Those who are not able to attend any of the meetings may send written comments by mail to: Georgia Division of Aging Services, ATTN: White House Conference on Aging, 2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 9-398, Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142; by fax: 404-657-5285, ATTN: White House Conference on Aging, and by email: whcoa@dhr.state.ga.us. Written comments will be accepted until July 15, 2005.

— Edna Jackson

Update: DHR Portal *continued from page 6*

commissioner, and have access to all kinds of DHR publications, policy manuals, forms, and employee-related information."

The portal expansion is managed by Hand and DHR Portal Director **Shelly Metschen**. This summer, staff of the Office of Communications and "subject matter experts" in each division and office will be trained to take over the job of updating and adding content to the DHR Web pages.

— Barbara Joye

Who's News

Zelyna Cano (below) demonstrates how she uses a computer to process inventory needs for Crawford Long Hospital, to Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases Director **Gwen Skinner**, Metro Region Regional Services Administrator **Lynn Copeland** and Regional Coordinator **Earnestine Pittman**. Zelyna participates in Project Search, which integrates people with disabilities into mainstream work settings at two hospitals. DHR, which funds employment programs for people with developmental disabilities, hopes to replicate this model throughout Georgia.



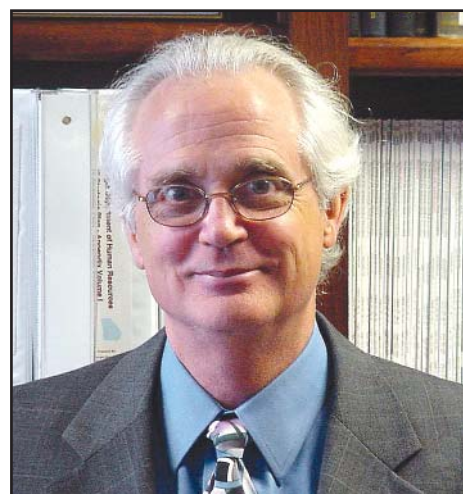
Natalie Thomas, state legal services developer for the Division of Aging Services, received

the Martha Eaves Award at the Georgia State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Conference recently. The award is given to an individual who is not an ombudsman but has made extraordinary and continuing efforts to strengthen the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. It was created in 2000 in honor of Martha Eaves for her exceptional advocacy for the Ombudsman Program.

As a legal services developer, Thomas works to develop legal services programs under the Older Americans Act Title III-B, which provides supportive services to people aged 60 and older. The civil legal services include representation, legal education and information. When an ombudsman isn't able to find resolution for a client, the Elderly Legal Assistance Program managed by Thomas steps in and offers legal guidance.



The Albany Civil Rights Museum gave **Elaine Wilson**, Long-Term Care Ombudsman coordinator in Albany, their Martin Luther King Jr. Dream Award in recognition of her work as an advocate for residents of long-term care facilities.



Stuart Brown, M.D. (above) has been named acting director of the Division of Public Health. Brown was previously acting health director for the DeKalb County Health District, where he has worked since 1989 in a number of roles including medical director for personal health service, medical director of the Central Health Center and director of the STD/HIV program. Previously he spent 16 years on the staff of the Centers for Disease Control and has authored 49 publications. He graduated from Dartmouth College and Cornell Medical School, where he received board certification in internal medicine.



What's News

The Office of Financial Services (OFS) was given a Pathfinder award by the Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission. The Commission collects a portion of fines paid by people who drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs and distributes the funds to people with traumatic brain and spinal injuries to help them pay for care and rehabilitative services. OFS handles accounting for the fund, which is administratively attached to DHR. The Commission honored OFS for its efforts to streamline the distribution of funds.

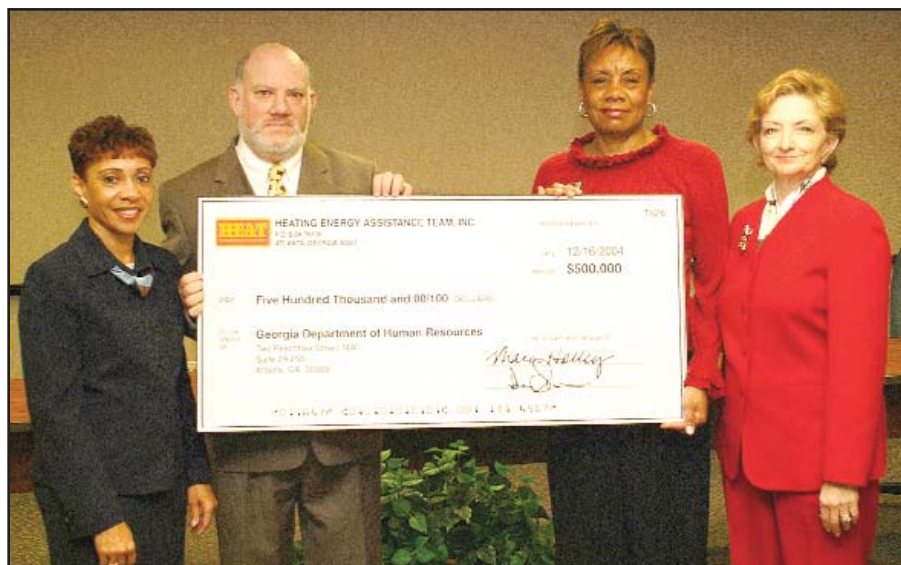


E-learning is here! No need to travel to a classroom — you can study at your computer. Courses currently available through the **Office of Human Resource Management and Development's Learning Management System**:

- Preventing Workplace Violence
- Telephone Etiquette
- HIPPA (Sections 1 and 2)
- Telework/Work Away

For more information and to register:
<http://www2.state.ga.us/departments/dhr/ohrmd/Training/OnlineCourses.html>

Courses scheduled to start later this spring: Employee Selection; Sexual Harassment; Workforce Diversity.



(l-r) **Janet Joseph**, Heating Energy Assistance Team (H.E.A.T.), Inc., executive director; **Ira Shucker**, H.E.A.T. chairman; **Commissioner B.J. Walker**; and **Mary Ellen Brown**, program manager, DFCS Office of Family Independence display a "check" from H.E.A.T., an Atlanta-based nonprofit organization that provides energy assistance statewide to needy Georgians who are unable to pay their energy bills. H.E.A.T. contributed \$500,000 to DHR this year. The funds were distributed to qualified households by **DFCS' Energy Assistance program** through local community action agencies.

"H.E.A.T. is pleased to provide increased funding from last year to help low-income citizens who may be facing energy emergencies," said Janet Howard-Joseph, executive director, H.E.A.T. "Private citizens and the natural gas industry, including SCANA Energy, AGL Resources, Georgia Natural Gas, Southern Company GAS, Vectren Source, Infinite Energy, and GasKey donated corporate financial contributions to help with the team effort."

Heroism

One of the DHR employee recognition awards that will be announced in May honors "heroism." Here's a story a reader sent in about a co-worker who became her hero:

In November, three Augusta Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) employees — **Pamula Tanner** and her passengers **Judy Saxon** and **Dianne Martin** — were driving back from lunch when they noticed a car weaving on the road. They pulled up close enough to see that the other car's driver was passed out on the front seat. Tanner flashed her lights and blew her horn to warn oncoming traffic while keeping up with the other vehicle until it drove onto an open field and stopped. The three OCSE staff went to the side of the unconscious woman and called 911. They waited by the car until an ambulance arrived before returning to their office.

"What a wonderful story of concern, courage and compassion for one's fellow man," said **Sandra Jarrett**, OCSE's Augusta Judicial Circuit office manager. "I know that most of us would have steered clear of a swerving vehicle on the highway and, at most, called 911. I would say that Pamula's actions were true heroism!"

The purpose of *The Human Side* is to provide interesting and important information related to DHR employees and their jobs.

Published by the DHR Office of Communications.

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